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Intonation of a Declarative Sentence in Megrelian¹

ABSTRACT

The present paper deals with intonation of a declarative sentence in Megrelian. Detailed analysis concerning the issue has never been conducted before. The research has revealed that the Megrelian declarative sentence – simple, simple complicated and compound – begins with a low pitch and ends with falling intonation; some speakers start a declarative sentence with a high pitch but they end it with a falling intonation contour without any exception; even within a sentence, the members gradually fall and rise in tone depending on a speaker's attitude, i.e. which part of speech they want to focus on. Emphasized parts of speech are outlined in a sentence this way. The results of the research are also important in terms of teaching Megrelian. The Megrelian declarative sentence is mainly characterized by LHL% intonation contour, though HL% intonation contour can also be found in rare cases.

Key words: *declarative sentence, intonation, Megrelian*

A sentences may be declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory and rhetorical (interrogative-exclamatory). They differ in intonation. A declarative sentence is generally characterized by a falling intonation contour.

Our research covers all Megrelian dialects. The research material was

collected during the scientific expeditions carried out within the framework of the project 'Megrelian-Laz Intonation' financed by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia. The material was processed using the Praat program.

The project did not intend to record Megrelian speech in Gali

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district as we knew in advance that it would be impossible to cross the Enguri River. However, we still managed to record the Megrelian speech of Gali inhabitants living on our side of the Enguri River during the expedition.

We interviewed respondents of different ages, genders and social classes using a specially designed questionnaire but we also recorded spontaneous speech contours. We used a voice recorder to obtain the material.

There are some opinions on intonation of the Megrelian declarative sentence in scientific literature, though it has never been the subject of a separate study.

The English summary of the work 'Linguistic Analysis of Megrelian' by a group of authors states that the Megrelian declarative sentence is characterized by the rise-fall intonation. It is separated from a preceding sentence by a pause (Kartozia, Gersamia, Lomia, Tskhadaia 2010: 596).

The present paper discusses intonation of the Megrelian declarative sentence considering the Megrelian dialects. We processed not only simple but also simple complicated and compound sentences as they are declarative sentences in terms of modality.

Simple Sentence

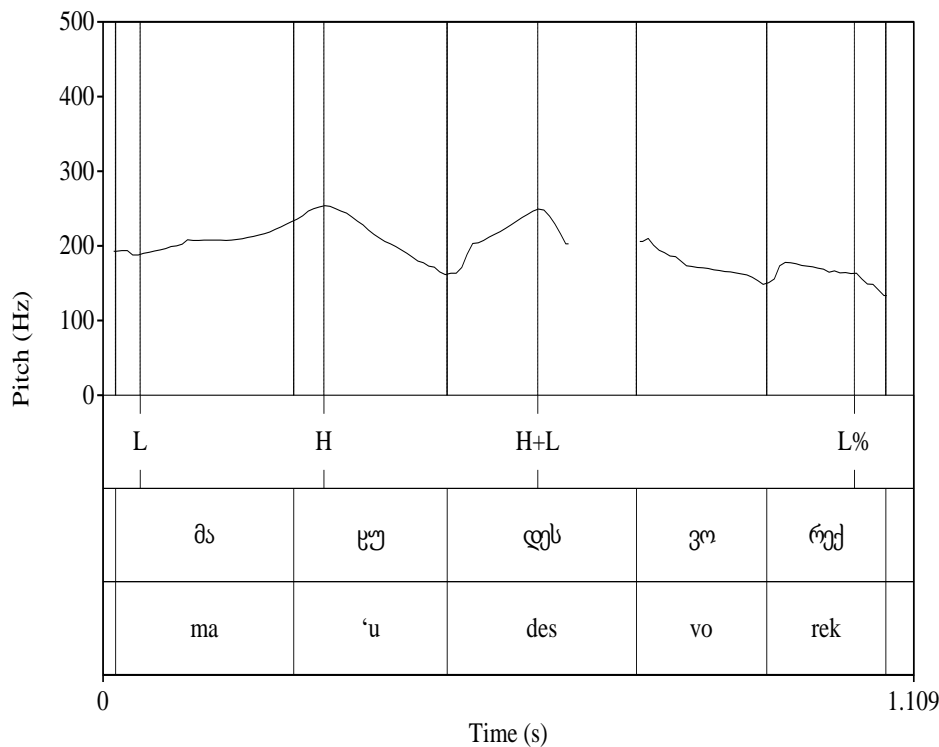
მა ცუდეს ვორექ

Ma 'udes vorek

'I am at home' [See Fig. 1].

This sentence starts with a low pitch in Zugdidian, Samurzakanian and Martvilian-Senakian, but the adverbial modifier of time rises in tone and we have a falling intonation contour (LHL%²) at the end of the sentence. The situation is the same regarding the speech of Chkhorotsku and Tsalenjikha (LHL%).

² L - Low tone, H - High tone, L% - Low boundary tone.

Fig. 1. Zugdidian, Woman

The word order is somewhat free in Megrelian, i.e. we can change the sequence of words. This does not cause any changes in the content. We would like to present the same sentence with the different word order:

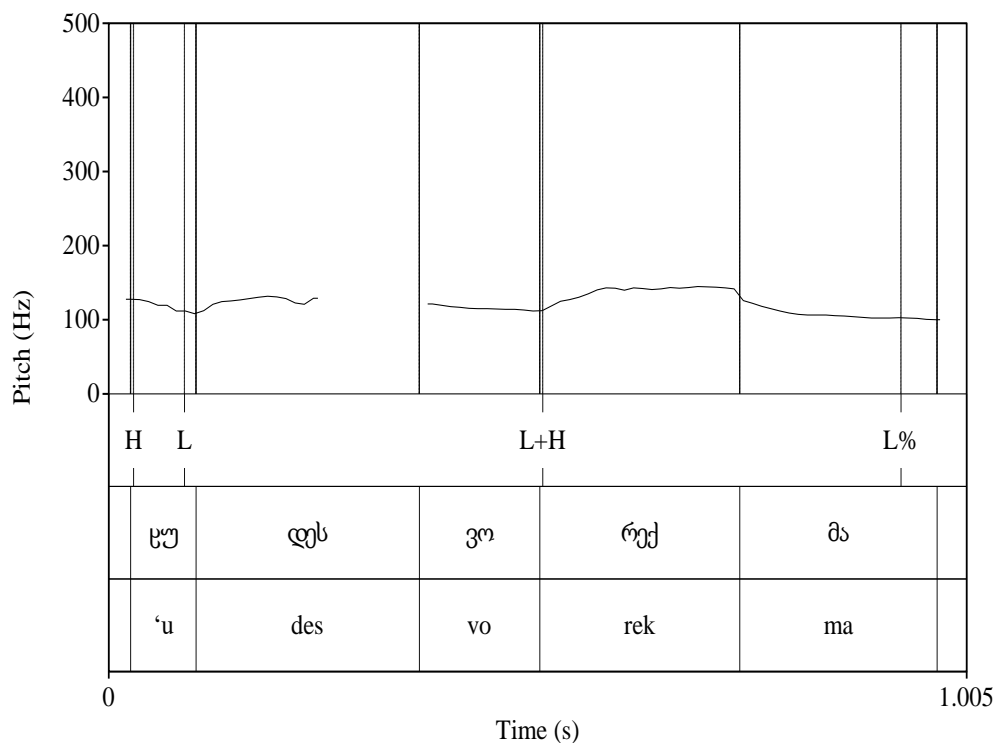
უდეს ვორექ მა ‘udes vorek ma
– ‘I am at home’ [See Fig. 2].

In this case, in Zugdidian and Martvilian-Senakian, the sentence starts with a low pitch but continues with a rising-falling-rising contour that falls at the end of the sentence (LHL%). The sentence starts with a low pitch in the speech of Chkhorotsku inhabitants but

the intonation rises only on the first syllable of a verb and then it falls again (LHL%). In the speech of Tsalenjikha and Khobi, this sentence starts with a high pitch rising from the last syllable of the verb as well and ends with a falling intonation contour (HL%).

It is noteworthy that each word has its own stress but in the sentence the emphasized parts of speech are outlined and the logical stress falls on them depending on a speaker’s attitude, i.e. which part of speech they want to focus on.

Fig. 2. Tsalenjikhan, Man



Simple Complicated Sentence³

მა ხილეფზე არძამ უმოსო / მანგარო მიცორს უმქური, ბული, სხული დო ატამა Ma xilepše arzaš umoso / mangaro mi'ors uškuri, buli, sxuli do at'ama – As for fruit, I love apples, cherries, pears and peaches [See Fig. 3].

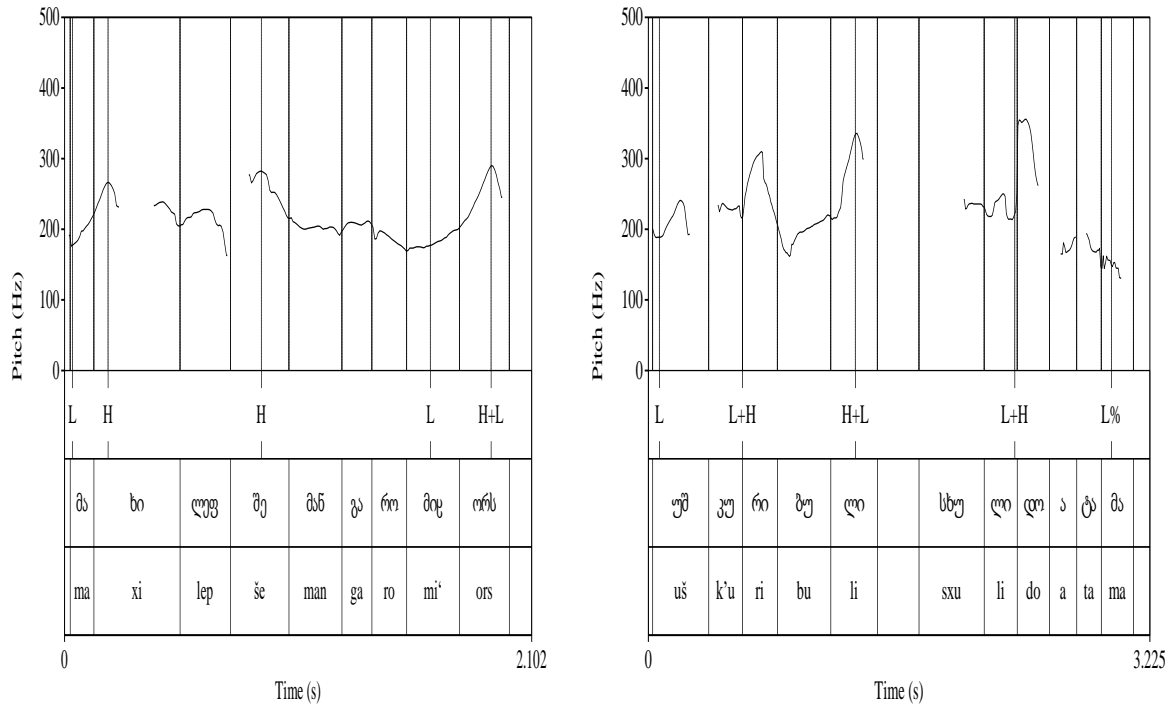
In the simple complicated sentence, the second direct object (in Gali, Chkhorotsku), the facultative constituent (in Martvili, Poti and

and დო do 'and' conjunction (in Senaki) are emphasized.

Some speakers start the sentence with a low pitch while others prefer starting it with a high pitch. Almost every word consisting of more than one syllable falls and rises in tone and ends with falling intonation. In the simple complicated sentence, like in the simple one, we have LHL% or HL% intonation contours.

³ A sentence that contains two or more homogenous members.

Fig. 3. Senakian, Woman



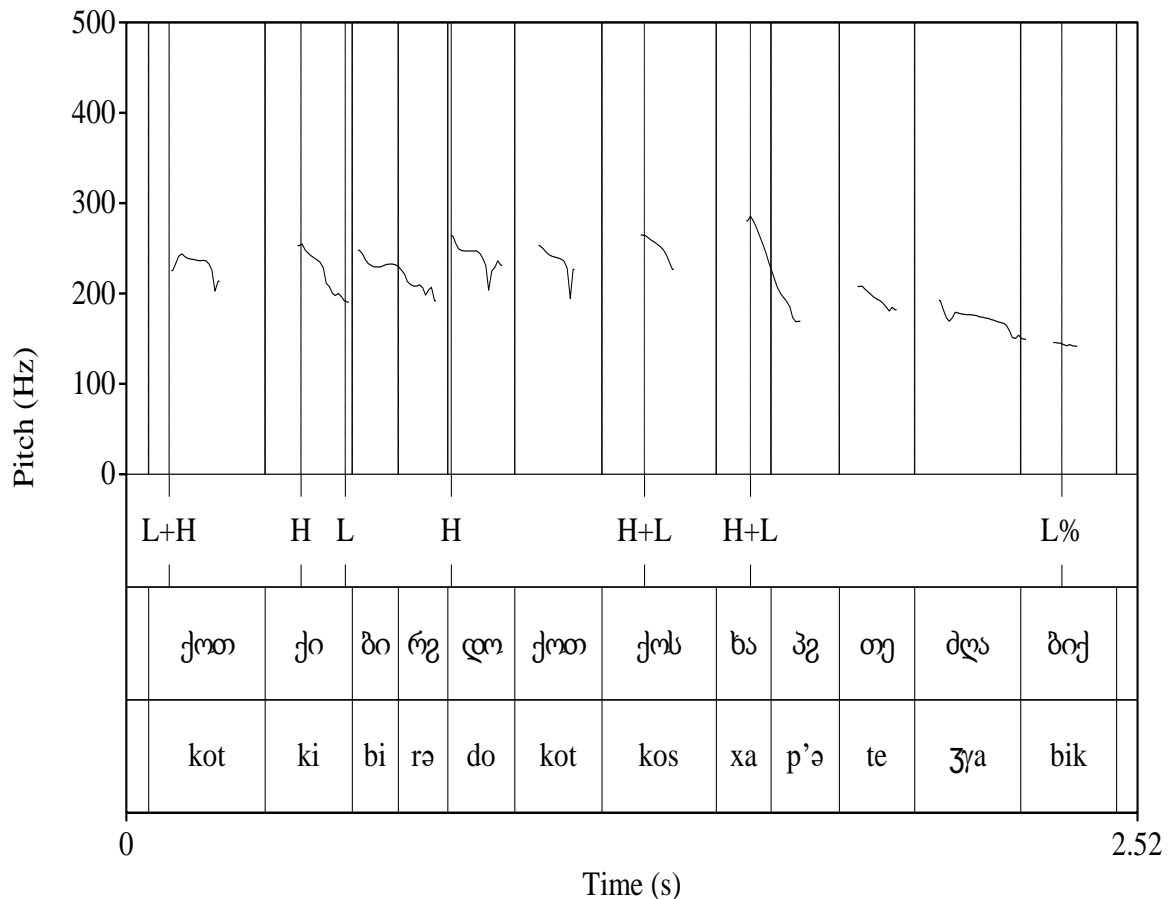
Compound Sentence

ქოთ / ქოც ქიბირე დო ქოთ / ქოც
ქოსხაპ(უ) ე / თე ძღაბიქ Kot / koc
kibirə do kot / koc kosxap'(u) e / te
ჰაბიკ – ‘This girl even sang and danced’
[See Fig. 4].

In this sentence, the main stress falls on the verb (in Anaklia, Gali, Tsalenjikha, Senaki), though, like in the speech of Chkhorotsku, some Senaki speakers emphasize the particle ქოთ / ქოც kot / koc ‘even’. This is conditional depending on a speaker’s attitude, i.e.

which word they want to focus on, e.g. one of the speakers from Martvili emphasized the particle ქოთ / ქოც kot / koc ‘even’, the second speaker stressed the conjunction დო do ‘and’ while the third speaker chose the first predicate. We can only generalize that the sentence mainly starts and ends with a low pitch but the members of the sentence are characterized by the alternation of rising and falling contours from the beginning to the end. In this case, we have LHL% or HL% intonation contours again.

Fig. 4. Samurzakian, Woman



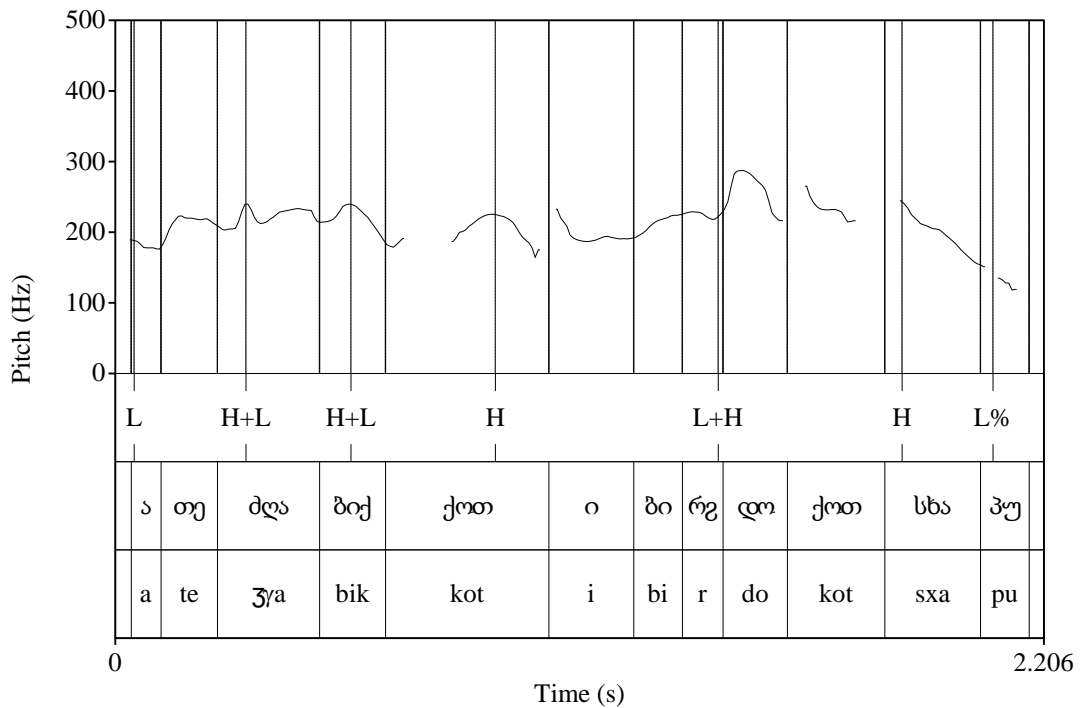
We would like to present the same sentence in reverse order starting with a subject preceded by a modifier:

ე / თე / ათე ძღაბიქ ქოთ / ქოც ქიბირ დო ქოთ / ქოც ქოსხაპუ E / te / ate ჯაბიკ kot / koc kibirə do kot / koc kosxap'u – 'This girl even sang and danced' [See Fig. 5].

The main emphasis is on the

conjunction დო do 'and' (in Gali, Senaki, Khobi, Poti, Anaklia, Martvili, Chkhorotsku, Tsalenjikha). In rare cases, the first predicate or the first particle ქოთ / ქოც kot / koc 'even' are stressed. With few exceptions, the sentence starts with a low pitch being followed by the rising and falling intonation. The sentence ends with falling intonation.

Fig. 5. *Khobian, Man*



We also discuss a complex sentence:

ე / ათე / ჰათე ბაღანაქ ინგარ(უ)
დო ინგარ(უ), მარა მითინქ ვემკაჯინღ
|| ვემიაქცუ ყურადღება

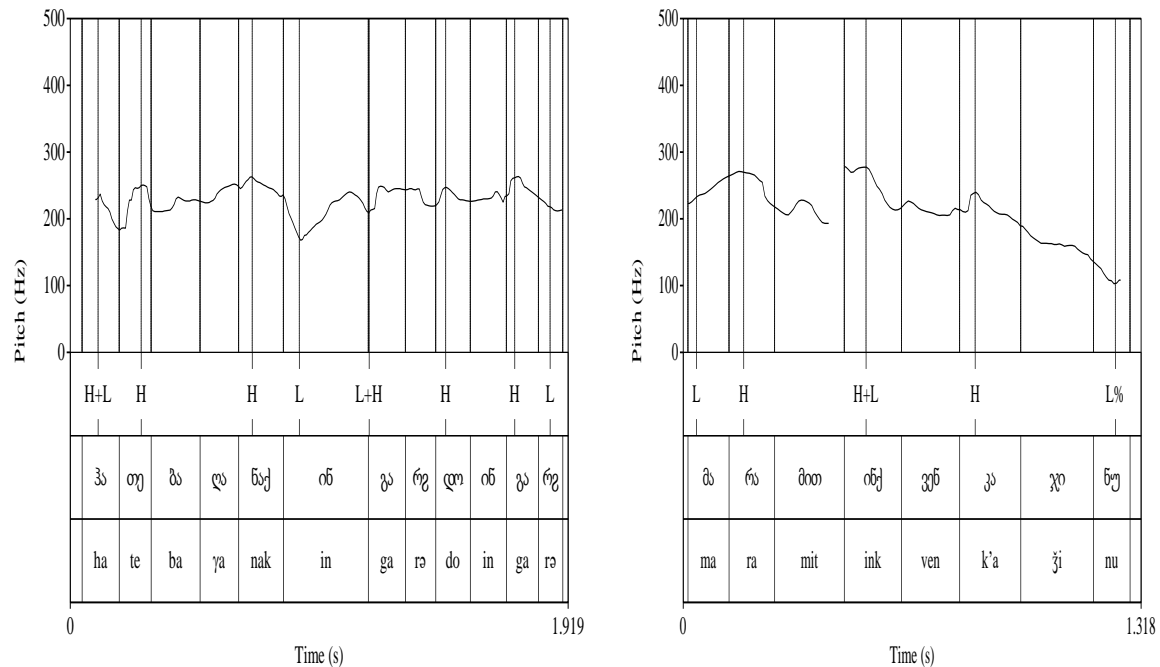
E / ate / hate baγanak ingar(u) do
ingar(u), mara mitink vemk'ažinə ||
vemiakcu q'uradyeba

– ‘This child cried and cried, but
no one looked at || paid attention to
him/her’ [See Fig. 6].

The main emphasis is on the
conjunction მარა mara ‘but’ (in Martvili,

Anaklia, Chkhorotsku, Tsalenjikha,
Senaki, Gali), the subject მითინქ mitink
‘no one’ of the subordinate clause (in
Martvili, Gali, Khobi), the subject of the
main clause (in Chkhorotsku) or the
predicate of the subordinate clause (in
Abasha). Most speakers start the
sentence with a low pitch, some speakers
prefer starting it with a high pitch,
though, in all cases, the sentence ends
with falling intonation. The syntagms in
the sentence are characterized by rising
and falling the intonation contour.

Fig. 6. Khobian, Man



In we interchange the members, the sentence will have such an order: ინგარ(უ) დო ინგარ(უ) ე / თე ბაღანაქ, მარა მითინქ ვემკაჯინღ || ვემიაქცუ ყურადღება Ingar(u) do ingar(u) e / te bayanak, mara mitink vemk'ažin || vemiakcu q'uradyeba – ‘This child cried and cried, but no one looked at || paid attention to him/her’.

Even in this case, the main emphasis is on the conjunction მარა mara ‘but’ (in Gali, Zugdidi, Poti, Khobi), the subject of the subordinate clause (in Senaki, Martvili, Anaklia), the

conjunction დო do ‘and’ (in Tsalenjikha) or the first predicate (in Martvili, Chkhorotsku). The vast majority of speakers start the sentence with a low pitch; some speakers prefer starting it with a high pitch, though, in all cases, the sentence ends with falling intonation.

We would like to discuss a compound sentence containing the particle -ნი -ni (in Martvilian-Senakian dialect the particle is lost):

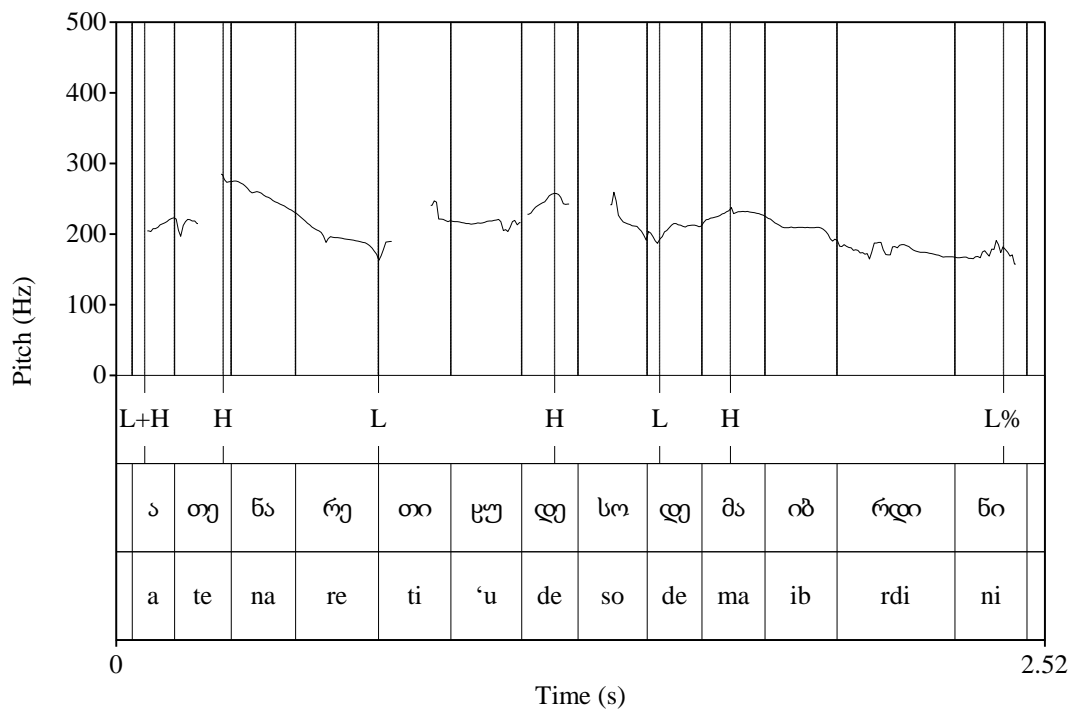
ათენა რე თი ცუდე, სოდე მა იბრდი(ნი) Atena re ti ‘ude, sode ma

ibrdi(ni) – ‘This is the house where I grew up’ [See Fig. 7].

In this sentence, the main emphasis is on the direct object ცუდე ‘ude ‘house’ (in Gali, Senaki, Khobi, Martvili, Chkhorotsku, Tsalenjikha). In just one case, the conjunction სოდე sode

‘where’ is stressed (in Tsalenjikha). With few exceptions, the sentence starts with a low pitch but in all cases, it ends with falling intonation. However, the syntagms in the sentence are characterized by rising and falling the intonation.

Fig. 7. Chkhorotskuan, Woman



ათენა რე თი ძღაბი, ნამუთ
გოწოლს გეგჩინებაფე(ნი) /
იგჩინებაფე(ნი)

Atena re ti ჯუაბი, namut goc'os
gepčinebape(ni) / ipčinebape(ni)
– ‘This is the girl I met last year’.

In this sentence, the main emphasis is on the direct object ძღაბი ჯუაბი ‘girl’ (in Gali, Abasha, Martvili, Tsalenjikha, Zugdidi) or the subject ათენა atena ‘this’ (in Khobi, Poti, Chkhorotsku). In few cases, the

adverbial modifier of time $\gamma\omicron\tilde{\nu}\omicron\lambda\text{'s}$ *goc'os* 'last year' (in Gali, Tsalenjikha), the conjunction $\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\mu}\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\omicron}$ *namut* 'that/who' (Senaki) and the modifier $\tilde{\omicron}\tilde{\omicron}$ *ti* 'that' (in Martvili) are stressed. In all cases, the sentence starts and ends with falling intonation like other sentences. The syntagms in the sentence are characterized by the alternation of intonation contours.

Conclusion

We can conclude that the Megrelian simple, simple complicated

and compound declarative sentences start with a low pitch and end with falling intonation but their members that include more than one syllable are characterized by rising and falling the intonation. Some speakers start a declarative sentence with a high pitch but end it with a falling intonation contour. The intonation contour of the members may rise and fall within a sentence. The Megrelian declarative sentence is mainly characterized by LHL% intonation contour and in rare cases, it is presented with HL% contour.

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